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ABSTRACT

This study was written as the Finnish contribution to a symposium convened to describe and analyze for comparative purposes the factual development of the position of women as educators, i.e., as employees in the school sytems of different countries. The study emphasizes the close connections that the position of women in the school system have with the general history and development of the country. Women as educators in Finland are described according to six historical periods in the development of Finnish schools. Simultaneously, statistical data concerning the proportional shares of women are presented for both historical and international comparison. The paper compares women's share in the teaching force of Finland with their proportions as principals or heads of schools, as functionaries in higher educational administration, as holders of positions of trust in trade unions of teachers, and with the general share of the women of Finland in the political decision making and planning of the country on the one hand, and its active labor force on the other hand. (Author/JD)

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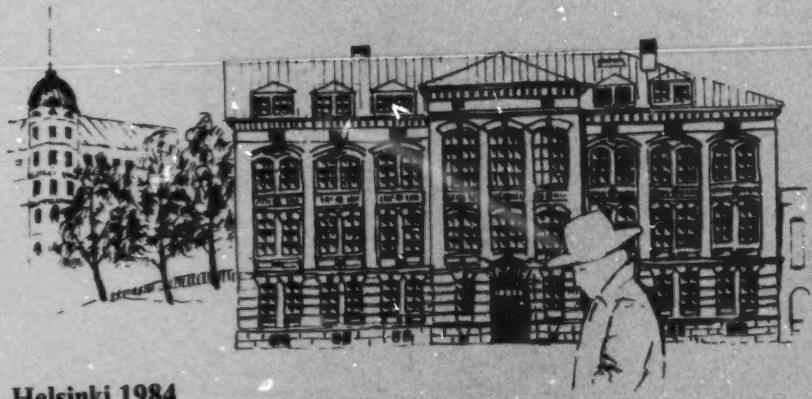
RESEARCH REPORT 22

Department of Teacher Education
University of Helsinki

Anna-Liisa Sysiharju

WOMEN AS EDUCATORS: EMPLOYEES OF SCHOOLS IN FINLAND



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Department of Teacher Education, University of Helsinki
Ratakatu 2, SF-00120 Helsinki 12, Finland

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PREFACE

This paper is written in order to present a short historical and statistical description of Finnish women as employees of schools - for purposes of international comparison at a restricted symposium on this theme to be held in connection with the Second International Interdisciplinary Congress on Women at the University of Groningen, the Netherlands, April 17-21, 1984.

As the information collected might interest even others than the direct participants of the symposium, it was decided to give this English version a somewhat larger publicity. It is, however, planned to rewrite the report in Finnish as a part of a deeper study and in that connection also an ordinary bibliography on the literature used will be given. Here the references are left out (except for the statistical data) as they mainly are accessible only for persons using the Finnish language.

Anna-Liisa Sysiharju

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1. GENERAL REMARKS

A description and analysis of the development and present situation of women as educators, as employees of schools in any country is certainly intertwined with many other general developments and social forces in effect in that country. In the case of Finland, at least the following should be mentioned:

- the general historical and political development of the country - Finland's centuries long road towards independence through Swedish as well as Russian rule, and through innumerable wars;

- the strong national awakening and struggle for a breakthrough of Finnish language as an instrument for culture, administration and education;

- the general economic and social development of the country - the prolonged character of Finland as a predominantly agrarian society based on small independent farms scattered throughout the forests, but with an unusually rapid industrialization and urbanization process concentrated in the period after World War II;

- the general development of its educational system - which in Finland, as a consequence of the above mentioned factors, only as of late took the form of a compulsory comprehensive school, preceded by a long period of parallel elementary and secondary school systems, during which a majority of the secondary schools were formally private but state supported and coeducational;

- the general development of the position of women - supported in Finland by some early historical records and a tradition of a quite high participation in education and working life - though not necessarily matched by realized equality or belligerent feminism.

Thus, in order to facilitate the comparative analysis of women as educators, in the following the situation in Finland will be described in the light of the historical development. Detailed references to the sources will only be included in the planned Finnish version of this paper because - except for the general historical development - most are only accessible in Finnish. The sources readily available for foreigners are the official series Statistical Yearbook of Finland and Official Statistics of Finland, also the new Statistical Survey No. 72. Position of Women 1984, all published by the Central Statistical Office of Finland. - It should also be noted that the internationally used English-language educational terminology de facto has different shades of meaning in different countries.

2. THE EARLY CENTURIES ENDING WITH THE EIGHTEENTH

During six centuries, beginning with the twelfth, the main part of today's Finland formed the eastern part of the kingdom of Sweden and participated in its educational development. Thus, as early as in 1640, a university was founded in Finland, in the city of Turku -later it was moved to the new capital, Helsinki.

As a consequence of the Reformation, the Lutheran State Church was the only one allowed in all of Sweden and it was administratively in charge of all educational matters, both of the literacy of the rank and file as of the Latin schools for the clergy and civil servants. The reading and learning by heart of the catechism was considered a prerequisite for Holy Communion and for legal marriage for all women as well as for men. This was controlled and registered in the books by the parish parsons at yearly catechetical meetings in the villages. It seems that women often had here better records than men and in the villages they could be appointed to teach not only their

own children but even others to read. The Latin schools - at that time only for boys - were assigned new statutes in 1724 - but because of the recent long Nordic war these were mainly replicas of the old system from 1693. The development of Swedish schools stood still right up to the nineteenth century. For the acquirement of French-style etiquette and manners for the girls of rank in the Swedish cities some private pensions existed, often led by widows. A discussion of schools for girls had, however, hardly begun.

But in the eighteenth century, as a result of the harsh defeat of Sweden in the above mentioned Nordic war, the eastern Wiborg Province of Finland (preserving its separate character) had been transferred to the rule of the Russian Empire leading to some unexpected results for Finnish girls. The Empress Catherine the Great, born a German princess, in the spirit of enlightenment initiated many educational reforms, some of them specifically concerning girls. Among others, there was founded - not only in St. Petersburg, but also in Wiborg, in the year 1788, a separate "Demoiselle-Classe" for girls in connection with the German language "Hauptschule" functioning there. The "Aufseherin" or "Klassendame" for that class, Christine Trinite (1788-1795), seems to have been the first Finnish woman educator employed by the government.

The "Demoiselle classe" was not merely a passing caprice of an autocratic sovereign, but rapidly grew into a separate, highly appreciated "Töchter-Schule" and, before 1811, was followed by the foundation of seven other "Töchter-Schule" for the bourgeoisie in the towns of the Wiborg province. Administratively they were not subordinated to any church, but to the (German-language) University of Dorpat (Tartu) in Estonia. Locally each "Töchter-Schule" was led by a female 'first teacher', usually these were women of highly educated families. The majority of the other teachers were male from the neigh-

bouring boys' schools, thus representing the general level of their time.

3. THE FIRST SIX DECADES OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

The long debated reform of the Latin schools in Sweden led to the new school statutes of 1807, which subsequently were enforced there - but never in Finland. In 1808 - 1809 there was a severe war between Sweden and Russia and, as a result, in 1809, the whole of Finland was transferred from Swedish rule to the Russian Empire. This, however, was carried out, according to the wishes of the Emperor Alexander I, by declaring Finland an autonomous Grand Duchy, giving it the status of a nation among nations, preserving for Finland its own Swedish legislation, Lutheran church and the use of the Swedish language as the language of administration and education. In 1811 even the Province of Wiborg, the so-called "Old Finland", was unified with the new Grand Duchy of Finland.

For education this meant a combined inheritance of the already outdated Swedish Latin school system and the enlightened ideas already applied in the Wiborg Province, not to forget the eight girls' schools. Several school commissions sat and argued, before replacing the 1724 statutes still in force in Finland with new ones in 1843. These were the first in Scandinavia recognizing the principle and need for state girls' schools - true enough predominantly for daughters from the higher ranks and, in practice, restricted to five "Fruntimmersskola" functioning in Swedish - at that time still the language of culture and administration. In these girls' schools there were always two to four female teachers responsible for education and discipline, for teaching art, needlework (24 weekly lessons) and foreign languages. They also had to be present at the more theoretical lessons given by the male teachers of the school.

Though the competence of the female teachers could not as yet be based on university studies or specific teacher training and although they were not obliged, when appointed, to the formal oath of allegiance required of their male colleagues, the female principals of the state girls' schools had real authority also over the men.

In addition to the official girls' schools there existed during this period, in the Finnish cities and towns, several small private schools. The founders and teachers were usually female if the schools were either for small children of both sexes (the entering age for boys' as well as girls' schools was about 11 years) or were private girls' schools. Among these early independent women educators perhaps Sara Wacklin (1790-1846) should be mentioned. She was directing both children's and girls' schools for 37 years both in the northern town of Oulu as well as in the capital Helsinki and during the academic year 1835-36 she studied in Paris obtaining the competence of a French "institutrice". In her last years she wrote a very interesting book of memoirs from northern Finland.

The Lutheran State Church continued to be in charge of the educational administration of the country through its bishops' councils and through inspecting clergymen sent out by them. The church also continued to have the responsibility for the literacy and religious education of the ordinary Finnish-speaking rural population, in other words, the vast majority of the Finnish people. But a discussion and even some experimentation concerning the need for a broader and deeper elementary education for all was already going on. This was coupled with the ever louder demands for the right to use Finnish, the national language of the people,in administration, as well as in secondary and higher education. In 1858 it was declared that doctoral dissertations, written in Finnish, would be accepted at the university and in that same

year the first Finnish language secondary school preparing for university (though only for boys) was founded. The nation, its women by no means excluded, began to awake to a self-consciousness. Simultaneously it was taking its first fumbling steps on the road to economic change, towards industrialization and a marketing economy.

4. 1860 - 1890: THREE STORMY DECADES OF RAPID CHANGE

The succession to the throne of Alexander II bearing new, liberal policies, meant in Finland the starting point for many far-reaching reforms already long awaited. One of them was the declaration made in 1863, that after twenty years, in 1883, the Finnish language should have the same official status in Finland's administration as the Swedish language. This, of course, had many educational implications.

The sixties formed the starting point for an official general elementary education - true enough only developing slowly towards becoming compulsory by law. But in 1863 the first state teacher training college for elementary schools was founded in Jyväskylä and from the beginning this was a dual college, with one course of study for men and one for women. In principle both had the same program except for the very important handicrafts, but in practice there were a lot of restrictions aimed at maintaining the moral standards. Nevertheless this was the first possibility for women to obtain as educators a formal competence equal to men. It is certainly no accident that almost simultaneously, in 1864, unmarried women 25 years of age were declared juridically and economically independent. (Married women were still for a long time under the guardianship of their spouses.) It is interesting to note that when, in 1873, the seven first alumni classes (1867-73) of the college were studied, the majority of the 36 men (90 %) as well as of the 92

women (79 %) were employed in elementary schools, and that only nine of the women had married and therefore left teaching. For these "firsts", teaching really was a calling and a road to independence.

Also, in 1866, the first statutes concerning the rural elementary schools came into effect. These provided for boys and girls being taught separately and for four years courses, building upon a preparatory teaching which was still considered the duty of the home or the church. The latter was now developing small ambulatory schools for that purpose - mainly with women as teachers. Only elementary schools in cities and towns, there often considered "the poor man's school", were to contain two preparatory grades as well as the four "ordinary" grades. This may explain the fact revealed in the first elementary school statistics, presented for the school year 1873-74, that 71 % of the 150 teachers employed by the cities and towns were female, while only 39 % of the 234 teachers employed by the rural communities were female. In all, of the 384 teachers employed in the elementary schools 52 % were women. (Despite the plans, 45 % of the existing elementary schools were already mixed).

In the same decade, a state-owned "Normal School" for boys was founded as part of the formal and systematical training of university students (all still male) for teaching in secondary school. Only a few years later, in 1868, the female principal of the state girls' school (Swedish) in Helsinki, founded a private continuation class for the alumni planning to be teachers at the girls' schools. The national awakening of women was mirrored in the founding in 1864 and 1869 of the first two Finnish language girls' schools. Both were private, the latter located in Helsinki.

The time was now ripe to transfer the administration of the

rapidly enlarging educational system from the church to the state. A National Board of General Education was founded in 1870, and in 1872 the new statutes prepared by it were enacted for the secondary schools. As such, the girls' schools were now acknowledged and enlarged in many ways, there were no more formal restrictions as to the social background of their pupils - though they still were not planned to prepare for university or working life. However, at the very same time, in 1870, the first Finnish woman, through private studies and an application to the Emperor "for an exemption because of her sex", had obtained permission to study at the university.

Some interesting facts can be extracted from the first official report of the new Board of General Education. In the school year 1874-75 57 state secondary schools existed in Finland, 49 of which were boys' schools (partly lower level, partly upper level) and 8 girls' schools. Even in the boys' schools, in 41 % of them, there was a female teacher, usually for art, also, in 10 % of the school councils appointed for the boys' schools there was a female member. At the eight state girls' schools 49 % of the teachers were women, all the principals were female and in each of their school councils there were female members, one, two or three of the four to five members.

The decade of the 1880's continued with the advancement of both the Finnish language and of women. The number of Finnish secondary school pupils had already outgrown that of the Swedish ones (the percentage of the Swedish-speaking population being around 14 % during the period in question).

The claims demanding the possibility for women to participate in higher secondary studies directly leading to the university were growing stronger and stronger. At the university the first female physician had taken her degree in 1878 and the first woman had taken a Master's degree in 1882. Thus, when the gov-

ernment was unwilling to change the character of the girls' schools, the solution was the founding of private coeducational schools leading to university studies, the first Swedish one in 1883 and the first Finnish one, with a woman principal, in 1886. The university itself had already been willing to accept female students on an equal basis, but the Russian Emperor continued up to 1901 to require from each of them an individual application of "exemption based on sex".

It is no accident that during these years, in 1884, the first emancipatory woman's organization, "Suomen Naisyhdistys" was founded. A remarkable part of its first membership comprised women teachers.

As for girls' schools, as early as 1881 a private Finnish "continuation college", preparing teachers for Finnish girls' schools, had been founded to accomodate the rapidly growing number of private Finnish girls' schools. The government finally had to act and in 1885 new statutes were adopted specially for the girls' schools. The study courses were modernized and increased (to five years starting from the age of eleven) and the first five Finnish private girls' schools were taken over by the State. Similarly the State now took responsibility for the education of teachers for the girls' schools, taking over both the Finnish and the Swedish private 3 year "Continuation Colleges". But the competence of the female teachers graduating from these institutions was not sufficient for teaching outside the girls' schools nor for direct access to the University. Even at the girls' school the salary for a female teacher was lower than for their male counterpart, although the principal always had to be a woman. The road towards equality now led, more and more, away from the girls' schools towards the rapidly multiplying coeducational schools and university studies.

It should however also be mentioned that during these very same

decades many special teacher training colleges were founded giving women competence for teaching handicrafts, needlework, home economics, gymnastics etc. in different kinds of schools.

What about the elementary schooling? As still voluntary, it was only slowly increasing because of the reluctance of the local municipalities, economically responsible for the founding of schools. In 1881 new directions were given according to which boys and girls could be taught together provided that each sex obtained its appropriate instruction in handicrafts. In practice this meant a differentiation between male and female elementary school teachers and a quota system in teacher training that seems to have had aftereffects up to the present. Aftereffects can also be traced to the fact that in this early period it was considered natural that inspectors and principals of larger elementary schools be male.

5. 1890 - 1917: SLOWER AND MORE DIFFICULT PROGRESS

These last decades as a Russian Grand Duchy were difficult in Finland because of a program adopted in the Empire towards russification and of counteracting reforms. The facts of general political disquietude, revolutionary activity and finally World War I and the Russian Revolution should of course be remembered. It meant, however, for Finland great progress when, as a consequence of the first empire-wide general strike in 1905, a new legislation was accepted concerning a total reform of the Finnish Parliament and giving a general franchise to all Finnish citizens, women as well as men. As the first women in Europe, 19 Finnish women, many of them educators, assembled in 1907 to the first democratic Diet with 200 members.

But the repeated proposals of this parliament for compulsory elementary education for all Finnish citizens were never ac-

cepted by the Emperor. However, this elementary school began at that time to be accepted more and more by the people themselves. Around 1900 there were about 28 500 pupils in the elementary schools of the cities and towns taught by 864 teachers, 73 % of whom were female (much because of the existence of the lowest preparatory grades in the cities) - on the other hand, in the rural elementary schools there were about 76 500 pupils taught by 2 022 teachers, 49 % of whom were female. Thus in total, there were 2 886 teachers, 56 % of whom were women employed by the municipally administered elementary schools in Finland.

Even though only a part (since 1906 even some of the girls' schools) of the secondary schools included upper grades leading to the university level, the number of women studying at the university had in the year 1901 reached 385 or 16 % of the student body. In that very year these women gained equal rights with men as they were not longer obliged to get an "exemption because of sex". In 1915 as much as a third of the student body at the university was female. With more and more women taking university degrees they also increasingly began to avail themselves of the same opportunities as the male graduates for obtaining full competence to teach at secondary schools by studying and practising at the boys' "Normal lyceum", as mentioned earlier. (In 1909 as many as twenty women were practising there.)

In 1906 the difference between the salaries of men and women holding the same position in state secondary schools was abolished - but not until 1916 were women generally (with the exception of judicial powers) given equal rights with men to be appointed to teaching positions. Up until then women, even in this case, had to apply for an "exemption because of sex". But on the other hand it must be stressed that in Finland there has never existed any kind of formal order requiring female

teachers to leave their position in case of marriage. (In Sweden such an order was given as late as 1905.) Whether or not informal pressure may have been exerted is another matter. In any case the statistics for the school year 1910-11 report that 46 % of all the 1 957 secondary school teachers employed were women. The principal of a coeducational school could be either a man or a woman - quite often there was the practice of having both in the same school.

6. 1918 - 1969: THE FIRST FIFTY YEARS OF FINNISH INDEPENDENCE

At the time of the end of the World War I and of the Russian revolution Finland succeeded at the end of 1917 to declare itself a sovereign state and to obtain a general foreign acknowledgement of this independence. Nevertheless, the nation had still in 1918 to wage a tragical civil war, the wounds of which have been slowly healing.

The country heading now towards independent development, had 3.2 million inhabitants in 1920 with 70 % of its economically active population occupied in agriculture and forestry and only 16 % of its total population living in urban municipalities. Forty years later, in 1960, the total population was 4.5 million, 38 % of which were living in urban municipalities while the percentage of the economically active population occupied by agriculture and forestry had decreased by one-half, to 36 %, meanwhile between 1939 - 1944 there had been two difficult wars with Finland's eastern neighbour. The many changes ahead could not possibly have been imagined at the beginning of the life of this independent state.

To begin with the position of women, some of the obvious legislative inequalities still remaining were corrected during the

first decade: women got full municipal franchise in 1917, from 1919 on a married woman could take up a profession or business without formally presenting the consent of her spouse, starting from 1926 women had equal rights with men to be appointed to any public office (with some exceptions in the military or police sectors), and in 1929 a new Marriage Law was finally enacted, the leading principle of which was the independence and equality of the spouses.

The legislation introducing a compulsory municipally administrated but state supervised elementary education was enacted in 1921. Now the duty to attend school began at the age of 7 and the two lowest grades were usually taught by female teachers. Male teachers were found in the four upper grades, either in single-sex classes of boys or in mixed classes in which the woman teachers taught the girls handicrafts and gymnastics. But in larger schools women could also in the upper grades have their own single-sex classes for girls. Similar divisions of teachers were valid for the continuation classes of the elementary school, with the length of their courses growing during the half-century from short courses to two-year courses. Thus the final length of the compulsory elementary school was eight years, up to the age of fifteen. But, as soon will be described, more and more of the children were leaving the elementary school after the first four grades, at the age of eleven, in order to apply for the right to study at the rapidly growing parallel system of secondary schools.

But certainly at first the elementary school system and its teaching force grew - though without much change in the proportion of male and female teachers. Actually, in 1920 there were 6 800 elementary school teachers, 59 % of which were female - in 1967 the number was 25 500 and again 59 % were female. This similarity, however, hides the many changes in this teacher force, perhaps the most important being the increase of their

educational level. The early training colleges for elementary school teachers only required as a basis completion of the elementary school proper (though especially the female applicants often in reality had more education) and with four to six years of study these colleges did not quite reach the level of an upper secondary school (foreign languages in particular were totally absent). From 1934 on however, there existed also one teacher training college with a two year course requiring completion of the upper secondary school. And as the "baby boom" after World War II produced an immediate need for more elementary school teachers, a speedy solution was the creation of a few other "temporary" training colleges similarly requiring upper secondary school education. Thus already in the 1950's and 1960's more than half of the new elementary school teachers had this higher educational background.

Earlier it has been mentioned that despite the apparent equality of the male and female elementary school teachers a differentiation seemed to be very persistent regarding these educators. Thus the women teachers, during the first year of Independence, formed their own association with a program to abolish the old sex difference in salary - though this goal was not attained until in the 1950's. On the other hand the administrative posts for the elementary schools were considered a privilege and appropriate advancement for male teachers, thus the first female school inspector for elementary schools was appointed as late as in 1965.

As for the secondary school system, the last sex differences in teacher education were rapidly disappearing. In 1922 the old "continuation colleges" for women were discontinued as unnecessary. When the old "Normal Lyceum" for boys could no longer on its own satisfy the need for training increased numbers of secondary school teachers, the leading upper secondary girl's school in Helsinki was in 1934 made into a second "Normal

Lyceum". It was, however, required that the practising university graduates should teach one term in each of the two institutions. As after the war even the secondary schools were rapidly swelling, five new state "normal lyceums", now all of them coeducational, were created between 1955 and 1961.

In principle there was not much change in the Finnish system of secondary schools during the first fifty years of the country's Independence, although many school commissions were debating problems and although the content of the study courses naturally developed with the times. The prevailing structure was that the secondary schools received their pupils from among applicants who were 11 years of age and had completed the first four grades of the elementary school. Then followed five years (in the case of the girls' schools, six years) of study to complete the lower secondary level course. After this the pupil (by age of about sixteen), with a certificate of graduation could either leave for vocational studies or working life or he/she could continue at the upper secondary ("gymnasium") level for three years, leading to a matriculation examination for university competence.

If there was not much structural change, the increase in numbers and the development in the directions already perceptible before the Independence were even more conspicuous. Thus, with the facts from 1916-17 in mind, in 1930-31 there were 232 secondary schools with about 50 000 pupils and about a third of the schools were located in rural municipalities. Twenty years later, in 1950-51 the number of schools was 338 with about 95 000 pupils and with 42 % of the schools in rural municipalities. And finally only sixteen years after that, in 1966-67 there were 614 secondary schools with 282 000 pupils and nearly as many schools located in rural as in urban municipalities. The state schools continued to be in the minority (around 25-30 %) and the private schools in the majority (about

60 %), the only new feature being the municipal lower secondary schools, the proportion of which grew from 5 % in 1950 to 17 % in 1967. The proportion of coeducational schools was around 80 % at the end of the period, the few remaining single-sex schools being in most cases old, venerable state schools.

All these numbers clearly show that the Finnish secondary school during the first fifty years of independence had developed from a school for a selected, privileged minority to a general education system for the whole nation - in the 1960's, in fact, about half of each birth cohort, at the age of eleven were transferring from the elementary to the secondary school. This, however, also meant that the continued maintenance of a parallel school system was creating increasingly greater problems for the society.

The explosive growth of the secondary school system was naturally accompanied by a corresponding growth of the teaching force in the same period. Table 1 shows the statistics concerning this development and the participation of women in it.

Table 1. Number of teachers in the secondary schools of Finland 1920 - 1967 and the percentages of women among them (Source: Statistical Yearbook of Finland 1948 and 1967)

School year	Number of teachers	Percentage of women
1920-21	2 480	48,1
1930-31	3 243	51,5
1940-41	3 285	53,5
1947-48	4 880	56,8
1955-56	6 863	59,9
1960-61	10 450	57,2
1966-67	14 838	58,7

Almost from the beginning of Finland's independence women have been in the majority among secondary school teachers and their proportion increased until it reached about 60 % in the years just before the great school reorganization. There have been discussions concerning what the consequences of a large female majority among the educators might be especially for the development of male pupils. No similar sex quota system as in the case of elementary school teacher training has been used, however, - hardly even discussed - in connection with the selection of candidates to be educated for teaching in secondary schools.

Now it has to be emphasized that all the teachers of the secondary schools in Finland have always been subject teachers, teaching one to three closely related subjects to many different classes and grades in the school - in contrast to the elementary school teachers who usually had their own class (in small schools combined from several grades) of pupils to whom they were teaching almost all subjects. Later on some present percentages regarding women teachers will be compared for different school subjects. And there seems to be no reason to doubt that this variation has always been much more marked than the general overall statistics indicate - these differences have right from the beginning been observed in the proportions of men and women studying different subjects at the university.

7. 1970 - 1984: THE TIME OF GREAT REORGANIZATION IN FINNISH EDUCATION

It was stressed at the beginning of the preceding chapter how great economic and social changes occurred in Finland during the first half-century of its independence. The country of small farmers remote in the north had within one lifetime taken great steps on the road towards industrialization and urbaniza

tion, a transformation , which had begun much earlier in many other European countries and had taken one to two centuries. But in recent decades, after 1960, this transformation has more than accelerated in Finland, it has increased by leaps and bounds. If in 1960 38 % of the nation's 4.5 million inhabitants were living in urban municipalities, in 1980 this included as many as 60 % of the 4.8 million inhabitants. And if in 1960, 36 % of the economically active population were still occupied in agriculture and forestry, in 1980, in only twenty years, this proportion had dropped to only 13 %.

If we then add to these general frames the facts concerning the school as described in the previous chapter, it is not difficult to see that a great change in the educational system had been long overdue. During the 1960's many Commissions, Cabinets and Parliaments had been conferring until finally, in 1968, one of the great decisive resolutions of principle in the school question was passed by the Finnish Parliament. Finland was to abandon the parallel school system, in existence for a century, to abandon the state and private school connected with it, and to go over to a municipally administered, but state supervised, comprehensive school, compulsory for nine years for all children between seven and 16 years of age. In addition, both the upper secondary level, leading to university studies, as well as the Vocational education sector, unevenly developed and divided into many parts, were to be reformed and made more coherent. In turn these schools would together form "the middle level" of education, to follow on "the basic level". Finally also higher education within which new universities of a more or less regional character were rapidly created, was to go through a radical reform of its study and examination structures, as well as of also its administration. In this process the reform of teacher education was included. And in the future the programmes of adult education, peaking to new challenges of the time were waiting.

The implementation of the new comprehensive, compulsory "basic school" (in Finnish: "peruskoulu") was begun in 1970. The planning and realization of all the above-mentioned reforms, down to the smallest details, has certainly taken for all educators in Finland, all the years up to now. And still, regarding many points, there exists a need for correction and for finding answers to new, unexpected problems. In reviewing following statistical reports on the present situation, it must be kept in mind that in many cases they are describing new systems and terms that are not directly comparable to the former as presented above.

As for the teachers working in the new "basic" comprehensive school, they now are divided into two categories, "classroom teachers" and "subject teachers". The former work in grades 1-6, which together form the "lower level" of the comprehensive school. They resemble the former elementary school teachers in that they in principle teach most subjects in one, their "own", class of pupils. (However, regarding foreign languages, subject teachers may participate already at this level.) One result of the reform in teacher education, however, is that even the teachers at this lower level are now educated at the universities and receive a degree comparable to that of the other teacher categories. Most of the classroom teachers, described in Table 2, are of course still products of the teacher training described earlier. From Table 2 it can be seen that the proportion of women among the classroom teachers is now somewhat higher than among the teachers of the elementary school. Even after transferring the teacher training to the universities, the Ministry of Education has maintained the sex quota system for the training of classroom teachers and has kept it around 40 % for men and 60 % for women. Among the applicants in 1983 the proportions were 24 % for men, 76 % for women, so that the competition has been somewhat easier for men: 15,5 % of the male applicants, 8,5 % of the female appli

Table 2. Number of teachers and principals in the "basic" comprehensive schools of Finland 1980 - 1983 and the percentages of women among them x) (Source: data registers of the National Board of General Education)

Level of comprehensive school	Number of teachers 1980-1981	1983-1984	Percentage of women 1980-1981	1983-1984
Lower level				
Classroom teachers	16 749	17 063	62.5	62.1
Principals	395	429	4.3	5.8
Lower level total	19 545	19 954	62.5	62.0
Upper level - subjects				
Finnish/Swedish (=vernacular)	634	645	89.0	88.4
Swedish/Finnish (=not vernacular)	353	347	84.4	84.7
English	394	373	92.4	92.2
English & Swedish/Finnish	928	1 026	83.9	86.5
Swedish/Finnish & German	210	224	89.5	90.2
Finnish/Swedish & History	455	473	77.8	79.9
History & Social Science	305	307	64.3	65.1
Religion	117	117	79.5	77.8
Mathematics, Physics & Chemistry	2 066	2 229	47.0	49.8
Geography & Natural History	749	778	69.0	69.4
Music	213	271	53.0	44.3
Physical Education	802	784	55.6	55.1
Art	344	352	68.0	66.5
Home Economics	848	813	99.4	98.6
Textile Work	511	480	99.6	99.8
Technical Work	709	682	0.4	0.7
Commercial Subjects	134	131	49.3	55.0
Study Guidance	611	662	41.2	44.0
Principals	579	591	18.5	19.5
Upper Level total	12 294	12 558	61.5	62.4
Special Education				
Auxiliary teaching	681	689	51.8	52.4
Observation classes	365	428	17.3	17.8
Speech disorders	181	179	80.1	84.4
Reading/writing handicaps	571	603	69.5	70.3
Principals	120	119	20.8	19.3
Special Education total	2 400	2 738	51.9	52.2
Comprehensive school total	34 267	35 285	61.2	61.3

x) some of the less important, smallest categories have been left out

cants were accepted, the men with somewhat lower points.

As for the subject teachers of the comprehensive school described in Table 2 and the subject teachers of the senior secondary schools described in Table 3 it must be said that the division between these two is somewhat theoretical. The statistics follow the place of the formal appointment of the teacher and in principle the teachers of the senior secondary schools must have a higher academic competence in their subjects. But in practice many senior secondary schools are cooperating closely with the upper level of some comprehensive schools so that the same teacher may have lessons in both schools provided that she/he has the appropriate competence.

By comparing the subject teachers in Table 2 and 3 it can easily be observed that the sex ratios for the different subjects vary in a world-widely and historically well-known way: more women are teaching languages, home economics and textile work than are teaching mathematics, physics and chemistry. The only categories with very few women are technical work and observation classes - the latter being classes usually with a large majority of boys with severe behavioral problems. On the other hand the overall proportion of female teachers is around 60 % for all these levels of general education and the percentage for the senior secondary schools is only slightly lower than for the upper level of the comprehensive schools. (It must be added that the proportion of female students in higher education now is also slightly above 50 %.)

The proportions for the female principals recorded in tables 2 and 3 show a somewhat different picture: they are in a clear minority everywhere. This minority is clearest at the lower level of the comprehensive schools (here the traditions from the elementary school probably weigh heavily). Then, the figures are somewhat lower for the senior secondary schools than

Table 3. Number of teachers and principals in the "Gymnasium"/senior secondary schools of Finland 1980 - 1983 and the percentages of women percentages of women among them (Source: data registers of the of the National Board of General Education)

Subject teachers	Number of teachers 1980-1981	1983-1984	Percentage of women 1980-1981	1983-1984
Finnish/Swedish (=vernacular)	519	532	79.0	79.7
Swedish/Finnish (=not vernacular)	466	492	76.8	75.0
English	643	662	80.7	81.6
German	449	451	81.5	82.7
French	87	93	81.6	84.9
Russian	53	60	77.4	81.7
Latin	23	24	56.5	54.2
History & Social Science	380	387	44.2	41.9
Religion	353	361	77.3	77.3
Psychology/Philosophy	14	18	85.7	88.9
Mathematics	704	759	33.5	33.7
Physics	126	137	22.2	23.4
Chemistry	39	43	56.4	60.5
Biology	252	274	52.0	49.6
Geography	46	49	65.2	63.3
Music	14	19	50.0	47.4
Physical Education	194	204	57.2	55.9
Art	69	77	84.1	85.7
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All evening senior secondary	271	303	63.8	64.4
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Principals - day senior secondary	443	452	14.7	14.8
Principals - evening senior secondary	40	43	15.0	20.9
Senior secondary schools total	5 148	5 401	60.1	60.0

Table 4. Number of teachers at the institutions of vocational education in Finland 1974 - 1982 and the percentages of women among them[x)] (Source: data register of the National Board of Vocational Education)

Type of institution	Number of teachers autumn 1974	autumn 1982	Percentage of women autumn 1974	autumn 1982
Agricultural	527	790	27.0	31.3
Forestry	235	871	3.8	19.8
Technical	1 741	1 756	10.1	12.8
Vocational schools				
- state central	529	639	35.7	35.8
- municipal associations	1 974	2 740	31.1	33.2
- municipal	971	1 206	33.0	35.4
- industry	641	504	7.3	8.3
- handicapped	189	212	30.7	30.7
Seafaring	151	197	32.4	28.9
Commercial	1 671	1 894	59.0	64.4
Commercial special	156	163	30.8	39.3
Nursing	591	991	98.8	96.7
Cosmetology	37	33	83.8	87.9
Home economics	428	776	92.5	88.9
Hotel and restaurant	130	260	56.2	59.2
Short courses for reschooling	889	1 622	37.9	28.4
Teacher training	138	53	72.5	50.9
Vocational education total	11 637	15 668	37.8	41.6

x) Some small or changing categories have been left out

for the upper level of the comprehensive school and special education, where the difference between the last two is rather small. But the general trend seems to be towards slowly rising female proportions and on the other hand there have been so many recent administrative changes in the duties, position and election of the principals that it is difficult to predict what the future development will be. Anyway, the few female principals interviewed in this connection did not view their situation as specially problematic.

In Table 4 statistics are presented for the teachers in vocational education over a somewhat longer period. The general trend here shows somewhat rising proportions of women - while the typical differences remain between different kinds of vocational education. Here the field is still in the middle of a reorganization phase - among others the problems regarding the education of teachers are by no means solved - so that it is difficult to predict future trends. Unfortunately figures for the principals are not available for the moment.

In this connection it might also be interesting to look at the position of female teachers in some teachers' trade unions. Table 5 can well be compared with tables 2, 3 and 4 above. Firstly it can be readily seen that the Finnish teachers are generally well organized, the union memberships at least reach and may even exceed, the official number of appointments (members unemployed, retired or on leave for study, sickness or motherhood are some most obvious explanations for the differences) and, that the percentages of women members also at least reach, and may even exceed those for appointments. Secondly, it is also easy to observe that the percentages of women are generally lower at the higher, more "important" decision levels of the organizations - a phenomenon well known from all other fields in society and probably as well known internationally. However, it is interesting to note how "deep" this drop is in

Table 5. Proportion of women at different positions of trust in some trade unios of teachers in 1982 (Source: Position of Women, 1984 Statistical survey No. 72, Central Statistical Office of Finland)

Union and posts	Number	Percentage of women
Teachers' Trade Union in Finland		
- membership	42 612	65.3
- participants in general union meeting		37.9
- members in union central council		35.5
- members in executive committee		23.5
Association of Commercial School Teachers		
- membership	1 752	65.9
- participants in general union meeting		61.3
- members in union central council		50.0
- members in executive committee		37.5
Vocational School Teachers Union		
- membership	6 854	46.5
- participants in general union meeting		36.8
- members in union central council		42.5
- members in executive committee		25.0
Association of Teachers at Technical Institutes		
- membership	1 068	15.4
- participants in general union meeting		21.6
- members in union central council		9.3
- members in executive committee		25.0
Association of Workers' Institute Principals and Teachers		
- membership	556	57.2
- participants in general union meeting		50.0
- members in union central council		-
- members in executive committee		33.3

the large Teachers Trade Union (= representing comprehensive school and senior secondary school teachers) as compared with some other unions with much lower proportions of women in their membership. The difference in size between the unions in question is, however, so great that many factors may play a role. In any case all these percentages stand up to international comparison rather well.

As for the question concerning women as employed on higher levels in the educational administration, Table 6 can give some information, although the information on municipalities is based on a restricted survey only and the important intermedial level of educational administration in the provinces (number: 12) is lacking. In any case the table shows that there are quite a few women on the important municipal level immediate above the schools - especially when keeping in mind the proportion of women in the schools proper. On the level of state central administration, the usual hierarchical pyramid with men on the top is confirmed. However, it must be added that during the last 10 - 20 years much development towards balancing has occured.

Finally in table 7 some statistics on the participation of women in the political decisionmaking and planning are given. Of course it can be observed that there is still a long way to go towards equality - women are everywhere in a minority, although they form a majority of the voters. But even here many steps forwards have recently been taken, and it must also be admitted that education does not show the lowest percentages - probably because there exists in society a feeling that "education is a woman's place" among many other sectors of today's life.

It must also be strongly stressed that behind all of these many different observations there exists the general fact that

Table 6. Proportion of women in certain positions of the municipal and state educational administration in Finland (Sources: surveys done by working groups for equality in administration)

Administration and type of position	Number	Percentage of women
Municipalities (total number 464 in 1980)		
- Director of Educational System	319	6.6
- Secretary of Educational System	20	45.0
- Director of Instruction	28	39.3
National Board of General Education (1982)		
- Leading posts (Directors of Department, Heads of Bureau and higher)	26	15.4
- Others in responsible positions	44	40.1
- Referendaries etc.	78	69.2
- Office personnel	86	97.7
- Service personnel	11	54.5
Total	245	67.8
National Board of Vocational Education (1983)		
- Leading posts (not defined)	23	30.4
- Referendaries etc. (not defined)	95	46.3
- Others (not defined)	143	90.2
Total	261	69.0
Ministry of Education (1980)		
- Leading posts (Heads of Bureau, Directors of Department and higher)	22	9.1
- Others in responsible positions	43	18.6
- Referendaries etc.	50	60.0
- Office personnel	92	98.9
- Service personnel	17	35.3
Total	224	61.2

Table 7. Proportion of women at some levels of political decisionmaking and planning in Finland (Sources: Position of Women 1984, Statistical Survey No. 72, Central Statistical Office of Finland 1984 and a survey on municipalities prepared by the Council for Equality between Men and Women, Prime Minister's Office 1983)

Positions	Number	Percentage of women
Parliament and government level		
Members of the Parliament, elected in 1983	200	31.0
Cabinet Members, sitting since 1983	17	17.6
Ministers of Education (and Culture)	2	50.0
Members of all state committees (1983)	5 661	10.7
Chairmen of state committees	551	4.7
Secretaries of state committees	..	27.8
Members of committees, appointed by the Ministry of Education	1 337	19.4
Chairmen of these committees	139	10.8
Secretaries of these committees	..	40.3
Municipality level		
Municipal councillors, elected in 1980	12 777	22.2
Members of municipal governments (sample survey in 1982)	..	11.3
Alternate members of municipal governments (sample survey in 1982)	..	20.8
Chairmen of municipal governments	..	2.8
Vice chairmen of municipal governments	..	8.4
Members of municipal boards (sample survey 1982)	..	22.3
Chairmen of municipal boards (sample survey 1982)	2 020	11.8
Members of municipal boards of education	..	35.1
Chairmen of municipal boards of education	105	14.3

Finnish women have always been hard working - working at the same time outside the home (they transferred directly from the fields of small farms to factories and offices) and in the home; therefore they form an integral part of the total society. According to the above mentioned statistical survey "Position of women", in 1984 women formed 47,7 % of the total labour force in Finland. This also means that these 1, 173 million women belonging to the labour force formed 71,6 % of all women between 15 - 64 years of age and that among them 69,9 % were married, 49,7 % had children under 18 years of age and 22,3 had children under 7 years of age. Of all the 339 000 women having children under 7 years of age 77,3 % belonged to the labour force. Thus, according to the 1979 Use of Time study made by the Central Statistical Office of Finland, in the adult population, on the average the so-called total work time, which includes gainful employment, education and domestic work, was clearly higher for women (33 %) than men (31 %). Transformed into weekly hours this means 5 hours more work and less free time per week for women. Although specific statistics for teachers cannot be presented, these factors certainly operate similarly for them and they thus form one of the explanations for the inequalities observed above.

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